

Message Text

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11

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 SIL-01 LAB-04 NIC-01 OMB-01 SAM-01

COME-00 EB-07 /083 W

----- 109455

R 311003Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7617

INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

USMISSION USBERLIN

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, GW, UR

SUBJECT: SHELEPIN VISIT TO FRG

REF: BONN 2938

1. SUMMARY. THE BRIEF VISIT MADE IN THE FRG JANUARY 30 BY ALEKSANDR SHELEPIN, PRESIDENT OF THE SOVIET AUCCTU, HAS CLEARLY BEEN A SENSITIVE MATTER INVOLVING HIGH LEVEL DECISION IN BONN. FRG ACCEPTANCE OF THE VISIT REPRESENTS A REVERSAL OF THE POSITION TAKEN EARLY LAST YEAR WHEN A SHELEPIN VISIT WAS IN THE OFFING. END SUMMARY.

2. SHELEPIN MADE A BRIEF VISIT TO THE FRG JANUARY 30 (HE WAS SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE IN DUESSELDORF BY AIR FROM EAST BERLIN AT 10 A.M. AND LEAVE DUESSELDORF FOR MOSCOW AT 5 P.M.). SHELEPIN'S PROGRAM WAS CONFINED TO A VISIT TO THE DGB HEADQUARTERS IN DUESSELDORF, WHERE HE WAS SCHEDULED TO MEET WITH DGB CHAIRMAN VETTER AND OTHER LEADING DGB OFFICIALS. THE VISIT WAS NOT "OFFICIAL", OUR FOREIGN OFFICE CONTACTS EMPHASIZED, BUT A DGB AFFAIR.

3. THE SHELEPIN VISIT WAS CLEARLY A HIGHLY SENSITIVE ISSUE IN BONN. WE WERE GIVEN TO UNDERSTAND IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE THAT IT WAS PRECEDED BY VERY HIGH LEVEL INTER-MINISTRY CONSULTATIONS, AND WE WOULD ASSUME THAT THE CHANCELLERY TOOK A HAND IN THE MATTER.

4. THERE HAD BEEN TWO PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS AT, AND POSTPONEMENTS OF A SHELEPIN VISIT. THE FIRST WAS IN 1970. THE PRESENT PHASE HAD ITS ORIGIN IN VETTER'S SEPTEMBER 1973 VISIT TO MOSCOW. AT THAT TIME VETTER INVITED SHELEPIN TO VISIT THE FRG IN THE SPRING OF 1974. HOW-

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EVER, IN EARLY FEBRUARY OF THAT YEAR THE GERMANS MADE KNOWN TO THE SOVIETS THAT IN VIEW OF OUTSTANDING CHARGES IN GERMAN COURTS AGAINST SHELEPIN FOR COMPLICITY IN THE MURDER OF TWO UKRAINIAN EXILES DURING THE PERIOD IN WHICH HE WAS KGB CHIEF, A VISIT WOULD BE INOPPORTUNE. IT IS NOT CLEAR EXACTLY HOW THE PRESENT VISIT GOT UNDER

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WAY. SHELEPIN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE EAST BERLIN CONGRESS OF THE WFTU THIS WEEK PRESENTED AN OCCASION FOR AN ONWARD TRIP TO THE FRG. WE WOULD ASSUME THAT THE RUSSIANS TOOK THE INITIATIVE.

5. THE FIRST PUBLIC MENTION OF A POSSIBLE SHELEPIN VISIT WAS IN A SPIEGEL REPORT JANUARY 27. THE NEXT DAY, ERWIN KRISTOFFERSEN, DIRECTOR OF THE DGB INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT, CONFIRMED THE VISIT TO AFL-CIO REPRESENTATIVE IRVING BROWN AND AFRICAN LABOR CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PAT O'FARRELL. AT THE TIME, HOWEVER, KRISTOFFERSEN SAID THAT THE EXACT DATE FOR THE VISIT HAD NOT BEEN SET. EVEN AS LATE AS JANUARY 30, MEDIA TREATMENT OF THE VISIT WAS IMPRECISE, PRESUMABLY BECAUSE OF THE WAY THE GOVERNMENT AND THE DGB WERE HANDLING IT. THE FOREIGN OFFICE TOLD US IT INTENDED TO REFER ANY INQUIRIES TO THE DGB ITSELF. THEY WOULD SAY, IF ASKED, THAT A VISA HAD BEEN ISSUED AFTER CONSULTATION IN THE APPROPRIATE MINISTRIES, AND THE NECESSARY SECURITY MEASURES HAD BEEN TAKEN. THE BONN GENERAL ANZEIGER JANUARY 30 REPORTED THAT THE DGB HEADQUARTERS IN DUESSELDORF WOULD NOT CONFIRM THE SHELEPIN VISIT, ALTHOUGH THEY THOUGHT IT "POSSIBLE" JANUARY 30 OR 31.

6. COMMENT. THERE HAS CLEARLY BEEN CONSIDERABLE SENSITIVITY IN GOVERNMENT CIRCLES ABOUT THE SHELEPIN VISIT. WE ASSUME THAT, AS REGARDS POSSIBLE LEGAL ACTION AGAINST SHELEPIN, BONN HAS GIVEN THE RUSSIANS ASSURANCES THAT NOTHING UNTOWARD WOULD OCCUR. OUR FOREIGN OFFICE SOURCES REFERRED TO A PROVISION IN THE CRIMINAL CODE UNDER WHICH, APPARENTLY, LEGAL PROCEEDINGS CAN BE SET ASIDE IF OVERRIDING FOREIGN POLICY AND DOMESTIC PUBLIC INTERESTS ARE AT STAKE. WE GATHER IT WAS ON THE BASIS OF

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THIS PROVISION THAT THE TECHNICAL LEGAL DIFFICULTIES

WERE OVERCOME. CLEARLY, HOWEVER, HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL
DECISION-MAKING WAS INVOLVED, AMOUNTING TO A REVERSAL
OF THE POSITION TAKEN BY FRG AUTHORITIES EARLY LAST
YEAR. END COMMENT
HILLENBRAND

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